ONS: "Anti slavery Society"

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I am Estevao Cabral. ~~I left East Timor four years ago, lived in Portugal for three years and~~ I now work for Peace and Justice centre called Praxis ~~live~~ in London. Since fleeing my occupied country, I have been in close touch with our clandestine network in East Timor and Indonesia. Since I left, my people in particular the younger generation, have continued to take even greater risks fighting for our right to self-determination. They are going to great lengths and taking enormous risks to tell the world about repression, despite the efforts of the Indonesian government to isolate East Timor. The Indonesians above all want to hide the fact that they still have tens of thousands of troops in our country, to isolate the population from the guerrillas in the bush.

I must stress that as long as East Timor is occupied by these foreign forces, as long as these troops remain, my people will continue to resist them and reject their presence. It is a lie to say, as the Indonesian do, that East Timorese "have accepted integration". Since 1975, my people have said "integration never!". They continue to say this and will go on resisting until the last invading soldier has left our country.

I am deeply grateful to the Sub-Commission for the Resolutions you adopted in 1989 and 1990. They are proof that the UN continues to be deeply concerned about human rights abuses in East Timor. These Resolutions give moral support to the people inside, who face the threat of extermination by Indonesian

Despite the resolutions you have adopted, there has been no improvement in the human rights situation in East Timor. I continually receive news about violations, about disappearances and summary executions. People live in constant fear of arbitrary arrest, of maltreatment and torture. All this has become part of their everyday life, not only in the towns like Dili, Baucau and Viqueque but also in the villages. Today there are more territorial troops stationed in every village than ever before. They often declare curfews without notice and shoot people dead for violating the curfew that no-one knew anything about.

Tens of thousands of Indonesians have settled in East Timor, taking our land, running the economy, occupying the jobs and running the administration. And while more and more Indonesians arrive, hundreds of young East Timorese have been enticed into leaving the country, to get jobs in Java. This latest scheme, organised by a foundation that is run by the president's daughter, is presented as a way to solve unemployment. This is a wicked fabrication. It is a scheme to remove our young people and use them as cheap labour in factories owned by Indonesian conglomerates. It is a scheme to defuse resistance by the younger generation to the Indonesian invader.

At this very time, the Indonesians have fourteen battalions in East Timor, trying to crush the national resistance and capture its leader, Xanana Gusmao. They have tried to do this many times but have failed. And every time, it is the defenceless people who suffer. The forces of occupation blame the population for their failure and use it as an excuse to arrest and maltreat people, and continue with the cultural and physical extermination of our people.

For all these reasons, I urge the Sub-Commission to follow the situation in East Timor more closely than ever. It is more important than ever, this year, for you to speak out against human rights violations in East Timor. This is why I call on you, on behalf of so many people who are taking risks every day in the clandestine movement, to adopt another resolution in condemnation of Indonesian repression.

It is also crucially important for the United Nations and the world community to persuade the Indonesian Government to enter into serious negotiations with leaders of the East Timorese resistance. This is the only way to restore peace and end repression. Now is the time for all members of the United Nations to insist that International Law be upheld in East Timor. There is so much talk these days of a New World Order. The place to start creating this New World Order is in East Timor. It is indefensible for a large country to be allowed to colonise a tiny neighbouring country. It is indefensible for the Indonesian regime to be allowed to continue to abuse our people's right to self-determination. The integrity of our country must be restored. Only if this is done will there be an end to the persecution, sufferings and repression that has been the fate of the Maubere people since Indonesian troops invaded our country in December 1975.

It is up to you, distinguished members of this Sub-Commission, to raise your voice once again, against human rights violations in East Timor.

Thank you.